

Monitoring & Evaluation Manual – tSTFM&EM

Trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

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Issue date – Jan 2022



Monitoring & Evaluation

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trustea sustainable tea foundation



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Disclaimer

This Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Manual is an internal document of *trustea*. The policy is intended to be a guide for M&E team of *trustea* on the processes involved in conducting the M&E in an objective and independent manner. The policy itself or any part of it should not be shared with any external party without written permission of the Director of *trustea*.

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1 Monitoring Policy

The monitoring function of *trustea* will have the following objectives:

1.1 Monitoring objectives

1. To track the progress of various activities of *trustea* at regular frequency.
2. To measure the outputs achieved through various activities, using objective and measurable indicators, as defined in the LFA
3. To assess the quality of the outputs being generated against the timelines and resources utilized
4. To provide independent feedback to the management on the progress and the quality of outputs and outcomes being achieved
5. To flag any risk of deviation from the planned activities, outputs and outcomes and to provide recommendations for the course correction

1.2 Monitoring Frequency

The monitoring exercise will be done on a six-monthly basis.

1.3 Data sources for Monitoring

Monitoring exercise will gather data against various indicators as defined in the LFA. In addition, qualitative observations and findings must also be captured to highlight any risks, deviations or unintended outcomes. The key data sources for monitoring will be:

- TCMS reports
- *Tracetea* reports
- E-learning reports
- Interviews with Trustea officials – Code Management team, IT team, Operations team and Communications team
- Internal Audit reports of entities
- Interview with Entity, CP and CB officials
- Management reports of entities
- Questionnaire based survey with auditors and consultants
- Questionnaire based survey with workers and staff of entities

1.4 Data confidentiality

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Trustea M&E team will be bound by the M&E Code of Ethics as defined in the General M&E Policy. The M&E team will protect the personal data of the individuals as well as of the stakeholders, collected during the M&E exercise. Following will be the specific policies followed for data protection:

- i. *Trustea* will sign NDA with the stakeholders who will be part of the M&E exercise – mainly entities, CBs and IPs. The NDA will define the data usage and data sharing clauses.
- ii. Any organizational data considered sensitive for the business of the stakeholders should not be put in public domain.
- iii. The M&E reports published or displayed in public domain will only share aggregated data and will not share any individual’s (tea grower, worker, staff etc) personal data.
- iv. For any case study or photograph to be displayed in the reports, specific person’s consent will be taken and recorded.
- v. Any survey with any individual or organization will be done only after seeking consent from the concerned individual or organization.

1.5 Baseline studies

The monitoring and evaluation exercise of *trustea* will be based on objective comparison of baseline data of entities with the data collected at the time of monitoring or evaluation exercise. Thus, collection of baseline data will be an integral part of the overall M&E process of *trustea*.

Baseline data on all important indicators must be collected at the time of registration of any new entity. The tool for baseline collection is provided in M&E Policy, however, the tool can be suitably modified by the M&E department based on the characteristics of the entity.

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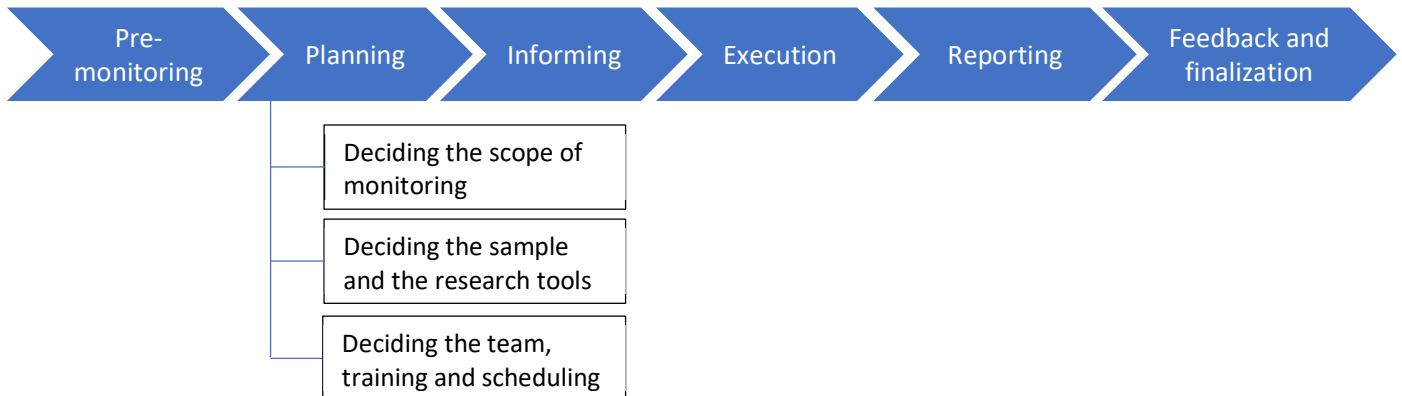
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2 Monitoring Process



2.1 Pre-monitoring analysis

For every monitoring cycle, before the on-site monitoring starts, the M&E department must extract and analyze data from the software (TCMS, *tracetea* and E-learning) on the various monitoring indicators. The insights from the data analysis should be used to identify the issues and to decide the focus during the on-site monitoring. This can also help in choosing the sample. The data should also be used to fill the monitoring checklist of indicators.

2.2 Planning

The planning for monitoring will include:

- i. Deciding the scope of monitoring
- ii. Deciding sample and finalizing research tools
- iii. Deciding monitoring team and schedule

Deciding the scope of monitoring for the monitoring cycle

Based on pre-monitoring analysis, the M&E Head should decide the key areas that monitoring exercise should focus on, in that monitoring cycle. The scope of monitoring would guide the interviews with stakeholders, primary surveys, sampling and the indicators to be reported on.

The M&E policy provides a comprehensive list of indicators (in LFA) and the research tools. These should be taken for guidance. The M&E Head has the prerogative to finalize the list of indicators to report on. Similarly, the research tools provided can be suitably modified to gather the data needed for the monitoring scope decided for the monitoring cycle.

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While the scope can be defined by the M&E Head, it must be ensured that within a year all ‘critical indicators’ are reported on and M&E should be able to provide its observations on them. ‘Critical indicators’ have been defined in the LFA.

Finalizing the sample and the research tools

The research tools for monitoring, mainly imply the means through which data will be gathered to report against the indicators. As earlier discussed TCMS, Tracetea and E-learning reports will provide data for several of the monitoring indicators.

In addition to the reports from the software, monitoring will involve gathering quantitative and qualitative data through interviews and questionnaire-based surveys. This primary survey will be particularly important for many outcomes related indicators.

A set of research tools have been developed to gather data from various sources. However, the M&E Head must modify or develop new tools based on the monitoring requirement with evolving scope of *trustea* activities or other changes happening in the tea industry or in the code.

As discussed earlier, the research tools have to be appropriately adapted by the M&E department for each monitoring cycle based on the scope defined for that cycle. Following research tools are provided in Annexure for gathering data:

Research Tool	Data source	Purpose
ET 1: Questionnaire for Entity Practices	Sr. Management of Entities	For data collection from the Sr. management of entities regarding entity practices and data on outputs and outcome indicators
ET 2: Questionnaire for Entity Staff and Workers	Staff, Workers or Tea Growers of entities	For data collection from the staff or workers of entities, regarding staff related practices and outcome indicators
ET3: Questionnaire for feedback of Entities	Sr. Management of Entities	For gathering feedback from Entities on Code, Certification process and support.
IP 1: IP Monitoring Questionnaire	Sr. Management of IPs	For primary data collection from the management of IPs
IP 2: Consultant Survey	Consultants of IPs	For primary data collection from consultants of IPs
CB 1: CB Monitoring Questionnaire	Sr. Management of CBs	For primary data collection from the management of CBs
CB 2: Auditor Survey	Auditors of CBs	For primary data collection from auditors of CBs

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EX I: Exit survey	Sr. Management of IPs or CBs	For conducting exit interviews for IPs and CBs dropping out of trustea partnership
CS I: Consumer Survey	Tea consumers	For gathering feedback from tea consumers

Sampling for Baseline

A baseline survey must be done for any new entity registering for code certification. The baseline data will help objectively measuring the changes and impact during support period and post certification. For baseline data should be collected from the management as well as the staff and workers of the entity. The research tools and proposed sample is provided below. However, M&E Head may suitably modify the sample as well as research tools to suit the entity characteristics.

Proposed sample per entity and research tools for baseline

Baseline data to be collected on	Data source	Sample	Research tool
Practices of entity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management team Management Reports 	NA	ET 1: Questionnaire for Entity Practices
Staff	Staffs from different levels	10-15	ET 2: Questionnaire for Entity Staff and Workers
Workers/Tea Growers	Factory workers and tea growers	15-20	

Sampling for on-site monitoring

Based on the scope of the study, M&E Head must decide the sample size and select the sample of IP, CBs and Entities to be visited. If the data is available, then the sample of consultants and auditors to be surveyed should also be pre-selected.

The sample for the staff of entities and the tea growers can be selected during the visit. However, the sample size for their survey and the kind of staff and tea growers to be surveyed (sampling strata) must be pre-decided based on the scope of the monitoring. The stakeholders to be covered in the monitoring, tentative sample size and the sample selection method is provided in the table below.

The sampling methodology is deliberately kept non-statistical in nature to provide greater flexibility to M&E Head to decide the scope and focus of monitoring. This will also allow monitoring exercise to be executed within available resources of time and budget.

Suggested Sample and sampling methodology for each monitoring cycle

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Stakeholder to be covered	Suggested sample size	Sample Selection method
Entities – with active certifications	Minimum: 5 Maximum: 7	Purposive sampling based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Type of entity Size Any other stand out feature
New Entities – in Support stage	Minimum: 3 Maximum: 5	Purposive sampling based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Type of entity Size Any other stand out feature
Staff of entities	Per entity Minimum: 5 Maximum: 10	Stratified sampling Stratification to be guided by scope of monitoring. Some suggested stratification parameters are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Departments or job roles Hierarchy Age Within a strata sample can be randomly selected.
Tea growers/Workers of Entities	Per entity Minimum: 10 Maximum: 15	Stratified sampling Stratification to be guided by scope of monitoring. Some suggested stratification parameters could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Landholding Within a strata sample can be randomly selected.
IPs	Min. – 2 Max. – 3	Purposive sampling based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of entities supported Any other stand out feature
Consultants	3-5 consultants per IP	Random sampling
CBs	Min. – 2 Max. – 3	Purposive sampling based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of certifications done Any other stand out feature
Auditors	3-5 auditors per CB	Random sampling

Deciding monitoring team, training and scheduling

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The M&E head must decide the team involved for monitoring. A day wise schedule for the monitoring exercise should be prepared. The M&E team must be oriented and trained on the monitoring plan, sampling and the questionnaires to be used. Before start of actual monitoring in the field, M&E Head must ensure that the monitoring team is:

- Adequately briefed on the exercise and the day wise schedule
- Have knowledge of sample
- Have full understanding of the research tools (Questionnaires)
- Are adequately trained on the application (Computer Aided Personal Interview -CAPI) to be used for data collection

2.3 Informing

Before finalizing the monitoring schedule, the M&E Head must broadly take consent from all the stakeholders on the period of monitoring and must inform them of the:

- Scope of monitoring and broad activities to be conducted
- Research tools to be used
- Expected days of engagement at different entities
- Officials that monitoring team will be meeting and
- Support needed from various stakeholders

Once day wise monitoring plan is finalized, M&E Head must inform the concerned stakeholders of the plan. The plan must be communicated well in advance to the stakeholders. The plan should be communicated at least 2 weeks prior to the commencement of visits.

2.4 Monitoring Execution

The execution of monitoring with different stakeholders will involve the following:

Stakeholder	Activities	Research Tools to be used	Approximate person days engagement
Software data/pre-monitoring	Data gathering from TCMS, Tracetea and E-learning and filling the indicators.	NA	2
Trustea	Discussions with the Heads of Departments	NA	2
Per entity - Monitoring	Monitoring of Entity Practices	ET I: Entity Monitoring Questionnaire	0.5

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	Staff and worker monitoring	ET 2: Staff/Worker Questionnaire	1-2
	Entity feedback on support and certification	ET3: Questionnaire for feedback of Entity	0.5
Per IP	Discussions with the relevant official	IP 1: IP Monitoring Questionnaire	0.5
	Survey with the consultants	IP 2: Consultant Survey	0.5
Per CB	Discussions with the relevant official	CB 1: CB Monitoring Questionnaire	0.5
	Survey with the auditors	CB 2: Auditor Survey	0.5
Consumer surveys	Consumer surveys can be done periodically	C1: Consumer Surveys	NA

2.5 Data collection and quality check

The on-site primary data for monitoring and evaluation will be collected through mobile CAPI (Computer-assisted personal interviews) application. Following quality assurance procedures must be followed to ensure data integrity:

- Research tools should be finalized in pre-monitoring stage as per the defined scope
- Training of enumerators on samples, tools and activities to be performed as defined in pre-monitoring stage.
- Configuration of questionnaires should be done on CAPI. The questions should have adequate validations and conditionalities to avoid data inconsistency.
- The response types should be mostly objective with defined validations (response types could be - radio, date, multi-check, dropdown, or numeric with validations).
- ‘Text’ type questions should generally be kept limited in number
- Photographs must be taken as evidence wherever possible.
- The data points showing extreme values must be corroborated by qualitative observations by the M&E team members.
- The data captured through CAPI should be monitored at back end by an Analyst on a daily basis, during the monitoring exercise. Any outliers must be discussed with the on-field team.
- After the data collection is completed, the data set should be cleaned. It must be checked for inconsistencies; and outliers should be re-confirmed. If the outlier data is not substantiated, then it should be dropped from the analysis.
- Before converting into M&E analysis reporting the data quality will be checked by the identified data reviewer keeping in mind the following points –
 - Accuracy
 - relevance,

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- Completeness including gaps
- Timeliness, and
- Consistency including outliers

The IT Manager will assist the data reviewer as per Data Value chain _ Annexure D (Assurance System Guidelines) in this exercise. Any deviation noted will be flagged to the concerned data owner for review and correction.

2.6 Monitoring reports and sharing of reports for feedback

The reports of monitoring can be shared through:

- i. Monitoring dashboard
- ii. Monitoring report (after conclusion of each on-site monitoring cycle)

Monitoring Dashboard

Monitoring dashboard should be created for important indicators. The data for the dashboard will be populated through:

- TCMS reports
- Tracetea reports
- E-learning reports

These data extraction from the above platforms can be automated through API integration, thus providing real-time feed to Monitoring Dashboard. In addition, the dashboard will also be populated with data gathered during on-site monitoring visits. The access to dashboard should be provided to the stakeholders. – M&E committee members, trustea management, entities, CBs, IPs and CPs.

Physical reports

In addition to dashboard, monitoring team should prepare concise monitoring report after completion of each on-site monitoring cycle. The report should include:

- Data on the quantitative indicators
- Comparison of indicators with the baseline data
- Qualitative observations
- Unintended outcomes of trustea code or certification process
- Recommendations for improvement

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The report must be shared with the concerned entities, CBs and IPs for feedback. Upon receiving the feedback, the reports should be finalized.

2.7 Sharing of final report

The dashboard as well as the physical monitoring reports should be shared with the following stakeholders:

- Council of *trustea*
- The Director of *trustea*
- All department Heads of *trustea*
- Concerned stakeholders – entities, IPs, CBs

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3 Evaluation Policy

3.1 External evaluations

trustea will be conducting evaluation exercises which will primarily involve measuring outcomes and impacts. Evaluation studies or impact assessment studies will be carried out through external agencies.

The agencies will be engaged through a competitive selection process involving technical and financial bids. The scope for external evaluations will be defined by the M&E department and has to be approved by the Council. The Terms of Reference (TOR) release and shortlisting process will be managed by the M&E department.

The final selection and approval of the external agency will be done by the *trustea* Sustainable Tea Foundation and approved by the council

3.2 Frequency of external evaluations

External evaluations and/or impact assessment studies will be conducted at a frequency of 3 years.

3.3 Sharing of the evaluation report

The draft report must be shared with the concerned stakeholders for feedback. The report should be finalized after receiving and reviewing the feedback of the stakeholders on the draft report.

The report must also be published on the website of *trustea* and its Executive Summary or summary presentation should be published on the social media platforms of *trustea*. All the direct partners of *trustea* including the CPs, CBs, IPs and entities should be shared a copy of the report.

3.4 Scope of evaluation or impact studies

The exact scope of the evaluation studies or impact assessment studies will be defined in the form of a TOR by the M&E department and must be approved by the *trustea* Council. As a guidance, the evaluation study can follow the OECD’s DAC framework¹ for the evaluation of the *trustea* initiative, which includes the following parameters:

¹ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

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Relevance and Coherence	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Impact	Sustainability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of the code and the certification process in the India tea industry • Relevance of the parameters of the code • How well the <i>trustea</i> interventions fit the objectives of and the overall government sustainability initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outputs in the form <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Certifications done ○ % of industry being covered ○ Amount of verified tea ○ Effectiveness of processes – code management, data management, handholding support, certification process, traceability of verified tea etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource utilization • Total cost to amount of tea verified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental impact • Impact on business practices • Societal impact • Unintended outcomes and impact <p>Under these broad heads the evaluation or impact assessment study must assess on the indicators discussed in the LFA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustea financial sustainability • Trustea dependence on grants • Observations of financial stability of partners such IPs and CBs • Opinion of CPs and entities on importance certification and its need • Demand for certification

The evaluation reports should compare baseline and end line data to be able to objectively establish outcomes and impacts achieved through *trustea* code and certification process.

REVIEW RESULT:

REVIEWED BY: Anandita Ray Mukherjee

Revise Date:

ISSUE DATE: 03.01.2022

APPROVED BY: Rajesh Bhuyan

REVISION NO.: 0